

ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Approved

February 28, 2023

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order for its online virtual meeting via Zoom on Tuesday February 28, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Commission Members: Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Phil Lasker, Jen Rothenberg, and Josh Fenollosa. Phil Lasker and Sarah Carrier were not in attendance. Recreation Director Joe Connelly and Captain Richard Flynn were also present.

Anticipated Speakers : N/A

Preliminary Matter: Phil Lasker, Park & Recreation Commission chair, took formal attendance via a roll call and read a statement pertaining to Governor Baker's Public Meeting Law change due to COVID-19 regarding virtual meetings. Meeting business ground rules and procedures were also covered by Mr. Lasker.

Special Event Request – Reservoir Path – 6/10/23 – Joyce Murphy

Mr. Connelly briefly reviewed the request by Ms. Murphy for the Alzheimer's walk around the reservoir beach on Saturday, June 10th. The event is sponsored by a Lexington based organization. Ms. Murphy reviewed the request and reason for requesting the location. The Commission and Ms. Murphy discussed the event.

Ms. Mayer motioned to approve the request with the following conditions, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 4-0.

1. Dogs must be on leash at all times and the event must advertise that fact
2. Trash In and Trash Out
3. Registration and Snacks to occur in grass area beyond vehicular access gate to left of boat ramp.
4. A food license is obtained through Arlington BOH

Off Leash Dog Program Review

Mr. Connelly and Mr. Lasker reviewed the reason for the Park Commission discussion regarding the off leash dog program and set some meeting parameters:

- 1 – General Review
- 2 –No major changes will be made without a greater public process
- 3- Start of a longer discussion and process
- 4 – Cannot change the town bylaw

Captain Flynn gave a brief overview of the program from an APD perspective and updated the commission as to the process for filling the vacant ACO position.

The Commission asked Captain Flynn and Mr. Connelly where the trouble areas seem to be:

- Menotomy Rocks Park
- McClennen Park
- Thorndike
- Spy
- Leashing dogs when DPW in the park an issue at each park

Mr. Connelly reviewed the importance of self-policing which was so successful when the off leash program was first implemented. Ms. Rothenberg suggested reaching out to the Friends of Parks for liaisons to assist in spreading the word on the program rules and assist in organizing the self-policing efforts. Mr. Connelly will bring this up at the next Friends of Parks meeting.

The Commission discussed the impacts of the pandemic on the current dog issues.

The Commission brainstormed ways to get the word out including:

- Education and sign off while registering dogs
- Signage
- ACO Meet and Greets
- Information during annual clean-ups and other public events

Approval of Minutes: 1/24/2023

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the minutes of February 14, 2023, as amended, seconded by Ms. Mayer. Approved 3-0-1 by roll call vote.

Ms. Rothenberg – Yes

Ms. Mayer – Yes

Ms. Canniff – Yes

Mr. Lasker – Abstain

Comments and Items for Future Meetings:

- a) AHS & Public Art Request Review – Proposed meeting 3/28 to discuss locations and alternative signs.

Correspondence Received: Were reviewed by the Commission

New Business: N/A

Open Forum – Public Comment: Public Comment was as followed pertaining to the Off Leash Dog Program Review

Liz Reisberg – What are other towns doing?

- Ms. Mayer - The density and land distribution make each town unique

Christina Waxlax – Afternoon hours should be a consideration

- Mr. Connelly reviewed the process for changing/amending the bylaw

Marie Meteer – Few problems, let's hear positive voices, parks for everyone including dog owners

Eve Evan – Menotomy is a positive place, discussion should take place in a larger public forum, afternoon hour consideration

Johanna Meyers – Thanked Commission for positive discussion, a second dog park or area to allow off leash additional hours, dog licensing time for education

Michele Meagher – Additional locations and hours, don't let a few bad actors ruin the program, agreed liaisons a good idea

Hazel Davis – Covid changed working hours as well which could impact usage, reservoir construction changed people's location, education is necessary

Kate Woll – Menotomy community having active conversations, park shared by entire town, would consider being liaison, ACO meet and greet great idea

Andrew Lane – Support continued use at Menotomy, parks shared by entire community, support ideas mentioned previously

Ville Lehtenon – Support use at Menotomy

Mr. Connelly summarized the action steps moving forward.

- Education and sign off while registering dogs
- Signage
- ACO Meet and Greets
- Information during annual clean-ups and other public events
- Setting up a wider public forum once new ACO in place

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn at 8:51pm, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 4-0 by roll call vote.

- Ms. Rothenberg – Yes
- Ms. Mayer – Yes
- Ms. Canniff – Yes
- Mr. Lasker - Yes

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Joseph Connelly